

REMARKS

With this response, Applicants amend claim 1 to include the elements of claim 5, and cancel claims 5, 16, and 17. The amendment of claim 1 adds no new matter.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejection

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. With this response, Applicants cancel claim 17, rendering this rejection moot. Applicants request withdrawal of this rejection and favorable action.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

Each of claims 1-17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Shaver et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,947,736, hereinafter "Shaver") in view of one or more of Lesguillier et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,727,804, hereinafter "Lesguillier"), DeRuijter et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20050036568 A1, hereinafter "DeRuijter"), Johnston et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,787,360, hereinafter "Johnston"), Folger et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,337,044, hereinafter "Folger"), Watler et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,836,655 B1, hereinafter "Watler"), Griffin et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20040063456, hereinafter "Griffin"), and Kang (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20050101312, hereinafter "Kang"). In particular, claim 1 stands rejected as unpatentable over Shaver in view of Lesguillier, and claim 5 stands rejected as unpatentable over Shaver in view of Lesguillier and further in view of Folger.

With this response, Applicants amend independent claim 1 (the only remaining independent claim) to include the elements of canceled claim 5. Independent claim 1 now recites, in part, recognizing at least certain incoming alphanumeric messages intended for an external interface module, called service messages, and for causing to be generated on the supply line, by said interface circuit of the central base, a message corresponding to each incoming service message, and when it receives a message received by the interface circuit of the central base on the supply line, determining whether this message must be

transmitted to the outside and, in this case, sending an outgoing alphanumeric message, called outgoing service message, corresponding to the message received.

The Office Action alleges that Shaver, as modified by Lesguillier, clearly shows and discloses the limitations recited in claim 1, and that Shaver further discloses the limitations, described above, recited in claim 5. With regard to Shaver, the Examiner relies upon col. 3, lines 35-40 and 49-53, and on column 4, lines 30-44. In particular, the Examiner points to the disclosure that

such a communication link, or bridge, is enabled by the built-in address fields in the 802.11 MAC frames, and is transparent to layers above the MAC; the 802.11 MAC data frames have up to four address fields, each specifying a source address (SA) a transmitter address (TA), a receiver address (RA), and a destination address (DA). The access point can forward a data frame received from a communication link (such as on a wireless medium) to another communication link (such as on a wireline medium) based on the SA and DA values received in the frame, thereby bridging the two subnetworks comprising these two links.

(See Office Action at page 13.)

The Office Action does not set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness, because Shaver is, at least in part, unavailable as a prior art reference and, in particular, is improperly cited by the Examiner because the disclosure relied upon (and quoted above) is not entitled to the benefit of the priority date claimed by Shaver. Simply stated, Shaver claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Nos. 60/331,616 and 60/341,168, filed on November 20, 2001 and December 13, 2001, respectively. The two provisional applications disclose neither the structure of the 802.11 MAC frames nor the address fields used to bridge the two subnetworks comprising the links. The first disclosure of these features is in the non-provisional application, filed on November 19, 2002. The priority date of the instant application is September 3, 2002. Therefore, the disclosure relied upon by the Examiner is not available prior art, and Shaver cannot, by itself or in combination with Lesguillier and/or Folger, render amended claim 1 unpatentable. Applicants submit that each of claims 2-4 and 6-15, which depend from independent claim 1, is patentable for at

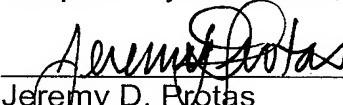
least the same reasons as independent claim 1. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, all pending claims are in condition for allowance for the reasons provided above. Applicants submit this Response with a petition for a three-month extension of time, and the required fee, extending the period for response to January 5, 2009. Although Applicants believe that no additional fees or petitions are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 13-2855 of Marshall, Gerstein & Borun, LLP under Order No. 31103/41036. Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the foregoing comments or any claim amendments deemed needed to result in allowance, Applicants kindly request the Examiner to contact the undersigned by telephone at the number given below.

December 31, 2008

Respectfully submitted,



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